

since the late Seventies. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) implemented by the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment offers opportunity to families living below poverty line to augment their income and cross poverty line through acquisition of credit based productive assets which would provide self employment on a sustainable basis. Families of rural youth living below poverty line are also covered under the IRDP. Since 1995-96, through a modification of the IRDP guidelines, a new category of beneficiaries viz. educated, unemployed, trained rural youth has been made eligible for a higher subsidy amount of Rs. 7,500/- or 50% of the project cost, whichever is less. A programme for Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), which is an allied programme of IRDP, seeks to impart new skills and upgrade existing skills of the rural youth in order to make them better equipped to utilise the assistance under IRDP in a sustained manner. Employment opportunities under the Employment Assurance Scheme and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana are also provided by this Ministry for the unemployed in rural areas which also include rural youths.

LPG Cylinders

2845. SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons for restructuring the supply of LPG cylinders to a registered consumer by Indian Oil Corporation;

(b) whether supply of only 10 cylinders in a year is a short term measure or permanent one; and

(c) the reasons of stopping the supply of kerosene to consumers having facility of two gas cylinders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Due to restricted availability of LPG and to prevent diversion of domestic LPG for unauthorised uses, Government has issued directives to all the Public Sector Oil Companies including Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., to regulate the supplies of LPG cylinders on the following lines :

(i) LPG refills be supplied to the Customers not before 21 days from the date of previous delivery by the Oil Companies.

(ii) The per capita consumption of the customer to be restricted to 145 Kgs per annum. Supplies as above meet the normal requirement of a household.

(c) SKO is a deficit product and 40% of the annual consumption within the country is imported. SKO is used primarily by the households for cooking and lighting purposes. Majority of DBC holders are in cities, where SKO is not required for lighting or cooking. In fact,

quota meant for LPG consumers is often diverted for black-marketing or adulteration. It was therefore considered necessary to stop SKO allocation to DBC holders, so that the same can be allotted to other needy persons. This was referred to State Governments to implement.

Central Administrative Tribunal

2846. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a Conference of Chief Secretaries to review the functioning of Central Administrative Tribunal and also of State Administrative Tribunal has been held recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the suggestions made by the conference in regard to clean administration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONYAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The major recommendations made by the Conference of Chief Secretaries held on 20.11.1996 in New Delhi to discuss an agenda for effective and responsive administration are given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

Recommendations of the Conference of Chief Secretaries held in New Delhi on 20.11.1996.

(i) The State Governments will be requested to devise suitable mechanisms including a high powered Civil Service Board and amend relevant rules for transparent decisions on postings, promotions and transfers of officials at all levels. These Boards could be strengthened in their political functioning by the appointment of a Civil Services Ombudsman to deal with the grievances of officials.

(ii) The approach to the elimination of corruption in the public service needs to address prevention, surveillance and deterrent prosecution, and deal ruthlessly with the nexus between criminals and unscrupulous elements.

(iii) The Government of India and State Governments should draw up a Charter of Ethics and Civil Service Code for the civil service.

- (iv) It is necessary to introduce greater transparency and openness in the functioning of Government and public bodies. This will cover, for example, movement towards a 'Right to Information Act.'
- (v) Accountability should be interpreted in a larger sense in order to ensure public satisfaction and responsive delivery of services. For this purpose, a phased introduction of Citizens' Charter for as many service institutions as possible could be considered.

Upgrading of Agricultural Marketing Machinery

2847. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a conference of Ministers from different States and Union Territories was held on 29th to discuss the challenges and constraints involved in strengthening and upgrading agricultural marketing machinery in the country;
- (b) if so, the subjects discussed in the Conference;
- (c) the number of Ministers attended the Conference; and
- (d) if so, the details of the decisions arrived at?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No Conference of Ministers from different States and Union Territories was held on 29th. However, a Conference of Ministers of State Governments and Union Territories was held on 30th January, 1997 at New Delhi to discuss the challenges and constraints involved in strengthening and upgrading agricultural marketing machinery in the country.

(b) The Conference discussed the issues related to agricultural marketing such, as Enforcement of Regulation, Development of Agricultural Produce Markets, Grading at Producers' level, Marketing Extension, Marketing Information Network, Training in agricultural marketing, Post-harvest management, Marketing of livestock and livestock products, Rural Storage, Panchayats as an instrument of marketing development, Implementation of Recommendations of the High Power Committee on agricultural marketing and other related issues.

(c) The conference was attended by 11 Ministers from the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar NCT of Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Rajasthan and West Bengal. Besides, Adviser to the Governor of Uttar Pradesh also attend the Conference.

- (d) The recommendations of the Conference are given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

The recommendations of the Conference of Ministers dealing with Agricultural Marketing in States/ Union Territories held on 30th January, 1997 at New Delhi are the following :

- (I) Rural markets/haats which are the first contact points for farmers to sell their agricultural produce should be equipped with adequate infrastructural facilities as would be laid down by a Sub-Committee of Ministers dealing with Agricultural Marketing and Services. The State Governments should also undertake development of rural periodic markets on priority basis through Panchayats, wherever possible by making adequate legal changes, if necessary, to provide better returns to the poor and marginal farmers in the rural areas.
- (II) Agricultural Produce Markets should be developed according to a Master Plan, based on objective criteria after taking into consideration the role and importance of individual physical markets in the flow of agricultural produce. Further, in the preparation of the Master Plan, all market users should also be involved in decision making regarding size, location, layout, operational needs. etc.
- (III) The transactional methods i.e. method of sale, weighing and payment should be made transparent as they have got a direct bearing on prices and marketing costs. System of open auction as provided by the Laws must be enforced by all the market committees.
- (IV) In the prevailing atmosphere of liberalisation and economic reforms in the country, efforts should be made to involve private sector in creating marketing infrastructure. Privatisation of some of the services such as garbage disposal, sanitation, collection of market fee, weighing of the produce, etc. may preferably be considered particularly in large urban wholesale markets.
- (V) It is essential that new markets for livestock, meat, fish and poultry are set up and the existing ones are upgraded by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.
- (VI) Marketing research, training and extension should form an essential ingredient for improving the operational efficiency of the markets and making them consumer oriented;